

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE D-19

WASHINGTON POST
15 February 1984

JACK ANDERSON

South African Group Pays for Lawmaker Trip

Seven members of Congress, five Republicans and two Democrats, recently embarked on a week-long trip to South Africa.

Their way was paid not by the taxpayers, but by the South Africa Foundation, a lobbying group registered with the Justice Department as a foreign agent.

There are serious ethical questions involved. The South Africa Foundation makes no bones about its efforts to halt the movement to get American companies to do no more business with South Africa.

Human rights groups argue that the threat to cut off U.S. investment in South Africa might force the government there to end its apartheid policy, which keeps blacks from voting and consigns an overwhelming majority of the population to the most menial jobs and humiliating social discrimination.

The South Africa Foundation claims to be "moderate" in its racial position and has publicly opposed the South African government's segregationist policy. But human rights advocates say the foundation is a

front for the South African government.

The seven members who took the foundation's tour of South Africa apparently see nothing wrong in accepting the freebie. When my associate John Dillon raised the question, each member or his staff pointed out that the trip had been approved by the House or Senate ethics committee.

"I had the opportunity to see really by and large what was going on there," said Rep. Ken Kramer (R-Colo.). "The blacks can speak out, in a limited way."

Kramer added that "black political rights are clearly inadequate," a masterpiece of understatement considering that 70 percent of South Africa's people can't vote because of the color of their skin.

South Africa Foundation representatives have had little trouble meeting big shots in the Reagan administration, including Cabinet members, high State Department officials, White House speech writers and CIA officers.

The congressional trip apparently arose at a meeting between foundation lobbyist John Chettle and Republican Study Committee Director Richard Dingman last year.

Besides Kramer, the travelers were Sen. Steve Symms (R-Idaho), and Reps. Danny L. Burton (R-Ind.); Sam B. Hall Jr. (D-Tex.); Manuel Lujan Jr. (R-N.M.); Eldon

Rudd (R-Ariz.) and Robert A. Young (D-Mo.).

I Told You So: The combined miscalculations of Secretary of State George P. Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger have resulted in a Middle East debacle so depressing as to spoil the I-told-you-so that consoles the spurned pundit.

From the beginning of the U.S. intervention in Lebanon, my intelligence sources warned that the Reagan administration was blundering into a quagmire from which there was no satisfactory exit.

These experts repeatedly warned that Syrian President Hafez Assad was skilled at treachery and trouble-making, that he "would be difficult for even the most determined opponents to outmaneuver," that he would pause to take the pulse of American resistance but "would not run away from a fight."

The warnings were ignored. Here are excerpts from the record:

October, 1982: Shultz and Weinberger assured President Reagan that the Lebanese army would be ready to take control of Lebanon in a matter of months. But I reported that the Lebanese army was in dreadful shape.

November, 1982: Shultz and Weinberger urged the president to increase U.S. financial and military assistance to Lebanon. I warned that "Lebanon may now wind up as a U.S. protectorate."